

REMARKS

Claims 1-44 are presently pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1 and 17 are amended to recite that the liquid only partially covers the substrate. Support can be found, for example, in Figs. 3-6 and the related disclosure. No new matter is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-33 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,191,429 to Suwa. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Further to the arguments in the February 6, 2009 Amendment and regarding independent claims 1 and 17, Suwa fails to disclose "the liquid only partially covering the substrate".

In the embodiment of Fig. 9, Suwa discloses a liquid immersion system that completely immerses the entire wafer W. Thus, Suwa fails to disclose partially covering a substrate.

For the foregoing reasons in addition to the reasons in the February 6, 2009 Amendment, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



Mario A. Costantino
Registration No. 33,565

Jonathan H. Backenstose
Registration No. 47,399

MAC:JHB/jhb

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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